

Justice Planning Visionary



TRAVIS COUNTY JUSTICE PLANNING

TRAVIS COUNTY, TX

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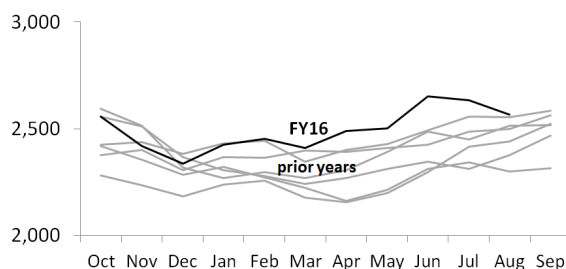
Implementing New Strategies to Manage the Jail Population

The Jail Population Monitoring Group (JPMG) continues to meet on a weekly basis to coordinate strategies to manage the jail population. The multi-agency collaboration has identified changes in process that can help eligible defendants receive a personal bond and decrease the amount of time it takes for court cases to be resolved. The group has also learned how other places have reduced their jail population. One example can be found in New York City where jail population was reduced by making improvements to court efficiency, supervising pretrial defendants in the community, and examining

“meaningless jail time,” sentence length for low-level offenses where people typically serve less than thirty days in jail. More information about these strategies can be found on the Center for Court Innovation’s [website](#) in a video called “Reducing Crime and Incarceration: Elizabeth Glazer at the Center for

Court Innovation.”

Since the JPMG began meeting, the rise in the jail population has leveled. The jail population was historically high mid-summer, but has returned to about where it was this time last year. The group plans to report to Commissioners Court with an update on its progress in September.



The jail population has leveled off recently, but remains high compared to previous years.

Sobriety Center Board to be Appointed

With an interlocal agreement approved, the Travis County Commissioners Court and the Austin City Council have sought applicants to serve on the board of directors of the Austin/Travis County

Sobriety Center. The board will consist of nine members, with four members appointed by each the Commissioners Court and City Council. The ninth member will be jointly

appointed by both bodies.

Appointment of Sobriety Center board members is on the Commissioners Court agenda for September 20.

Upcoming Events

THE LAURI WRIGHT STAND UP FOR SAFE FAMILIES PADDLE PARADE — OCTOBER 5, 2016

AUSTIN/TRAVIS COUNTY FAMILY VIOLENCE TASK FORCE — OCTOBER 17, 2016

7TH ANNUAL REENTRY CONFERENCE — JANUARY 18, 2017

AMERICAN CORRECTIONAL ASSOCIATION 2017 WINTER CONFERENCE — JANUARY 20-25, 2017 IN SAN ANTONIO

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Phoenix Court Graduation

On Friday July 29th, the Phoenix Court, a prostitution diversion court program of Travis County, held its first graduation. This program started in September of 2015 and is funded through the state of Texas. One of the main goals of this program is to help clients become self-sufficient through learning new job skills, becoming certified in a trade, and eventually employment. Our

two county court at law judges, Judge Mike Denton and Judge Brandy Mueller dedicate their time and actively engage with participants and court staff. A full time case manager works closely with everyone to walk them through the many phases of the program. A main component of this grant is to assist our clients in their search for employment, and Travis County Workforce

Development has relationships with many employers to help clients find work when they're ready. Jobs are critical to the clients' self-esteem and self-worth. While the state grant pays for certain services for the clients, such as sober housing and treatment, it is the clients' determination and grit which gets them across the finish line.

New Tools for Managing the Jail Population

One strategy for lowering the local jail population is to reduce court case processing time. The efficient movement of cases through the criminal justice system to a resolution minimizes the amount of time defendants wait for the disposition of their case. For some pretrial clients in jail, this could mean less time spent in jail. With the introduction of TechShare

Prosecutor this fall, new tools will be available to enhance the workflow involved with resolving criminal cases. One way in which TechShare Prosecutor will shorten case processing time is through the use of electronic discovery. The new software will also allow law enforcement options for managing and submitting digital media evidence as part of case filing. Finally, the

software will expedite case processing by allowing prosecutors to electronically offer and negotiate plea arrangements. More efficient case processing is expected to reduce some of the long pretrial stays in jail that drive up the jail population.

Mapping the Criminal Justice System, Part 2

When Becki Ney of the Center for Effective Public Policy led a mapping workshop, she promised that we would need to refine the results. Out of that process, we have developed a map of the criminal justice system

specifically as it relates to the jail population. The intent of this focus is to help our Jail Population Monitoring Group understand the processes that influence the number of people entering the jail and how long they stay. Justice

Planning worked with Pretrial Services, Court Administration, and the Capital Area Public Defender Service to understand the relevant processes. You can view the map on Justice Planning's website.

View the Travis County
Criminal Justice System
Map at:
[www.traviscountytexas.gov/
criminal-justice/research-
planning](http://www.traviscountytexas.gov/criminal-justice/research-planning)

New Leadership at Travis State Jail

The Travis State Jail has a new warden and assistant warden, both of whom have several decades of experience in corrections. Warden Calhoun has been with the Texas Department of Criminal Justice (TDCJ) since 1987 when he started as a corrections officer on the Estelle Unit. Most recently he served as senior warden at the Walker Sayle SAFPF (Substance Abuse Felony Punishment Facility). Assistant Warden Jameson

began her career with TDCJ in 1995 at the William G. McConnell Unit in Beeville. She has worked in corrections at TDCJ and private industry since then. Before becoming assistant warden at Travis State Jail, she was Chief of Security at the Hobby Unit. The staff of CTC looks forward to working with the new leadership team as their program continues to grow and develop.

Welcome New Justice Planning Employees

- Duncan Cormie, Social Worker, 512-854-1433
- Keith Goertz, Financial Analyst, 512-854-4751
- Robin Vassef, Chemical Dependency Counselor, 512-854-1433
- Salvador Velazquez, Chemical Dependency Counselor, Sr., 512-674-3611

Justice Planning Staff Voices: Why We Do What We Do

Katibeth Lee, Social Worker at CTC: What really drew me to the Justice Planning department was the clear goal of looking into the future and providing hope to populations of people who commonly aren't given much autonomy. The programs here may have different ways of looking towards the future but we are all a forward thinking team that seeks to

provide justice for those in need not just now but creating structures within Travis County that will support individuals for years to come. I love working with my clients in the Commitment to Change program and being a leader within our treatment team. I work to empower my clients to make positive changes in their lives, while providing

support and information on coping skills, life stages, change models, and other relevant information to the clients' experiences. It is truly amazing to see the transformation of individuals when they are provided with care, concern, structure, and education. We are all human and we all deserve the right to justice, compassion, and care.

Evaluation Advisory Committee

Commissioners Court created the Evaluation Advisory Committee (EAC) earlier this year to help the county communicate program results, articulate clear evaluation methodologies, ensure the transparency of

data, and create opportunities for sharing data.

So far, the EAC has investigated measurements of recidivism in use and calculated the number of

Travis County residents involved in the criminal justice system. The group is in the process of updating cost per day figures for the county jail. In addition, plans are in the works to develop a model program evaluation process.



Planning for Change, Working for Justice

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The mission of the Justice Planning Department (JP) is to support the Travis County Commissioners Court and key stakeholders by providing quality data analysis and the planning, implementing, and sustaining county-wide initiatives for the enhancement of public safety and reduction in crime. JP's vision is to make Travis County a safer, more engaged community by facilitating information exchange, promoting innovative justice policies and practices, and serving individuals who are involved in or at risk of becoming involved in the justice system. JP currently operates two direct service programs for Travis County adults who are or have been involved with the Justice System, Commitment to Change and Workforce Development Services. The Department performs a number of planning functions, including providing policy recommendations; coordinating collaboration between criminal justice stakeholders; Cultivating partnerships with community-based agencies; Designing and implementing local justice programs; Leveraging resources to strengthen and sustain justice planning and programming in Travis County. JP is also responsible for providing data analysis and research to inform justice policymaking and programming in Travis County. In addition to utilizing studies from the existing body of justice knowledge, the Department conducts original studies using local law enforcement and corrections data.

Travis County Commissioners

Sarah Eckhardt, *County Judge*
Ron Davis, *County Commissioner, Precinct 1*
Brigid Shea, *County Commissioner, Precinct 2*
Gerald Daugherty, *County Commissioner, Precinct 3*
Margaret Gómez, *County Commissioner, Precinct 4*

Justice Planning Staff

Roger Jefferies, *Justice & Public Safety County Executive*
Duncan Cormie, *Social Worker*
Efrain Davila, *Planner*
Chris Fortune, *Social Service Program Specialist*
Keith Goertz, *Financial Analyst*
Kirsha Haverlah, *Social Service Program Director*
Damaris Johnson, *Social Services Manager*
Katibeth Lee, *Social Worker*
Cathy McClaugherty, *Senior Planner*
Sandy Moreno, *Office Specialist Senior*
Kimberly Pierce, *Planning Manager, Justice Planning*
Emily Rogers, *Senior Planner*
Sandra Treviño, *Social Services Program Coordinator*
Salvador Velazquez, *Senior Chemical Dependency Counselor*
Robin Vassef, *Chemical Dependency Counselor*